

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

June 8, 2010

The Honorable Susan Bysiewicz
Secretary of the State
20 Trinity Street
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Secretary Bysiewicz:

I hereby return without my signature Senate Bill 312, *An Act Mandating the Regionalization of Certain Public Safety Emergency Telecommunications Centers and a Study of Consolidation*. This bill requires municipalities with populations of 40,000 or less to create regional public safety emergency telecommunications centers by July 1, 2016 in order to continue receiving 9-1-1 funds from the State and a study of feasible arrangements for such regionalization by July 1, 2011.

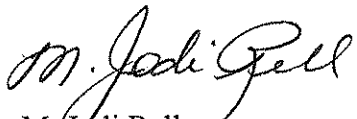
Regionalization is a concept for which I have been a strong and adamant proponent. Certainly, some services can be consolidated and resources leveraged across towns in our state to reduce costs. Indeed, numerous efforts advancing regionalization are already underway, including regionalization of our systems for planning and development, public health regulation and procurement of goods and services.

This bill, however, mandates regionalization without sufficient forethought of exactly how towns will achieve savings and make costly infrastructure changes. The law mandates a one-size fits all approach without consideration of the fact that certain regions may have different needs in emergency services and competing obstacles to consolidation. A statutory mandate that precedes the necessary due diligence associated with such comprehensive and systemic statutory requirement is problematic.

In addition, while the law mandates a study to address some of these issues, the study comes at a price-tag of several hundred thousand dollars – monies which instead could be spent directly on infrastructure enhancements necessary for actual implementation of emergency services dispatch regionalization in towns. Still yet, these same goals can be accomplished through an incentive-based approach to consolidation, as the current system provides, rather than a mandate.

I encourage the further exploration of regional emergency telecommunication centers by municipalities and support the continuation of existing monetary incentives to do so. A service as critical as the dispatch of emergency services is best managed through customized decisions made at the local level, rather than a broad-brush mandate imposed from the State Capitol. For these reasons, pursuant to Section 15 of Article Fourth of the Constitution of the State of Connecticut and Article III of the Amendments thereto, I am returning this bill without my signature.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "M. Jodi Rell". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

M. Jodi Rell
Governor